



For Immediate Release  
May 2, 2008

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**BAUCUS BLASTS BILL CUTTING HIGHWAY JOBS,  
FUNDS FOR URGENT INFRASTRUCTURE REPAIRS**

*Legislation filed today seeks to slash highway money from transportation bill*

**Washington, DC** – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) strongly condemned new legislation filed by Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-Tex.) that would gut \$5 billion for the Highway Trust Fund from the FAA transportation bill currently pending before the Senate, killing as many as 170,000 good-paying highway jobs in the process. In September of 2007, the Senate Finance Committee voted 16-5 to replenish the highway fund with \$5 billion to enable urgent repairs and to allow new infrastructure projects to start. That provision is currently in the FAA bill before the Senate, but the legislation filed today would strip it out.

**“Every billion dollars you spend on highway projects creates about 34,000 jobs, so every billion this bill cuts out of the highway trust fund loses those jobs for Americans who need them,”** said Baucus. **“The shortfall in the highway trust fund is nothing less than a crisis for public safety, and a huge hurdle to developing the world-class infrastructure our country needs to compete globally. Finance Committee and Commerce Committee leaders from both sides of the aisle agreed that the FAA bill presented an appropriate and timely opportunity to tackle the infrastructure crisis head-on. Stripping highway funds from this transportation bill would be the height of irresponsibility, increasing danger and congestion on our roads and robbing workers of good-paying jobs.”**

The legislation, which is being placed directly on the Senate calendar with no committee consideration, would strip several additional non-aviation provisions approved by the Finance panel as well. Baucus said today that he intends to lead a strong effort to make certain the bill does not advance and the highway trust fund is replenished now.

**“The FAA bill currently before the Senate is about more than aviation. It’s about strengthening the entire transportation infrastructure of the United States, making Americans safer no matter how they travel, and investing in working Americans just as much as we’re investing in asphalt and concrete,”** said Baucus. **“I intend to work to keep these vital highway jobs provisions in the FAA bill.”**

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